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A D V I C E

TO THE

P O O R;

WITH A

SHORT REMONSTRANCE

TO

THOSE IN HIGHER CIRCUMSTANCES.

BY JAMES STOVIN, Esq.

L O N D O N:

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ADVERTISEMENT.

TO the little treatise that follows, the writer thinks it unnecessary to prefix a long introduction : it may, however, be as well to say something, particularly as it has of late been usual to do so, and the Public seems very ready to enquire into every man's motive for publishing. Perhaps this has been chiefly owing to the writers themselves, who are generally ready enough, when they cannot hope to obtain praise by what they say, to lay in a claim to it, by an avowal of the

most pure and disinterested intention in saying it.

This is, at least, ill-judged. The Public is invited to read what is written, and if it is such as tends to promote its welfare, it has no concern with any thing farther : what actuates the breast, must, after all that can be said, be known fully only to the writer himself ; and even when he disowns the *hope of fame*, and the *love of gain*, he may, perhaps, remain strongly suspected, of having been incited either by the one or the other.

But are those motives improper ? I cannot say I think so. If a person of

education and ingenuity, in confined circumstances, is desirous of adding a pittance to his funds by contributing in any way to the entertainment or instruction of mankind, he is well entitled to his little earnings: he deserves praise as well as a pecuniary reward.

Can the love of fame be arraigned? It has generally, notwithstanding what it may now be thought proper to aver, been the stirring principle. Suppress all the books written from that motive, and most of the books worth reading will be destroyed. The love of fame inspires noble sentiments, and prompts to generous actions. It regards what is done, and the manner
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in which it is done. A real, pure love for their fellow-creatures, might and would move many to teach them their duty, but it would never induce them to pay attention to propriety and elegance of composition. In a word, were it once to become fashionable, to disregard the praise of men, or what is much the same, to profess to disregard it in literary pursuits, from that time would commence a period of deterioration, and, with a retrograde motion, they would return to the point from whence they set out.

All, however, that is meant to be said is, that it appears improper in publications of this nature, for a writer
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to declare to the world what his views in publishing are. Some must write for gain, and others will for fame, and it would be hard upon them, indeed, if their works should remain unread, because they were unable conscientiously to declare, that the desire of being serviceable to mankind was their only actuating principle.

Whatever an author may profess, his writings must finally be the best index of his motive ; and even when there appears from them the very best intention, he must be content to know that the good design of them is not admitted by all. He must remember, that when the great Instructor of mankind

kind was on earth, it was said, he
 “ cast out devils by the prince of the
 “ devils.”—That an Howard did good
 only to relieve his mind from the an-
 xiety that preyed upon it, from his
 ill-treatment of his son :—And that
 the disinterested supporters of the Abo-
 lition of a traffic, iniquitous and black
 as night, are impelled by no better
 motives than a wish to gain popularity..

Boreas Hill;
April 16th, 1792.

J. STOVIN.

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TO THE

P O O R, &c.

THE present age has been called, by way of triumph, the age of humanity, and it certainly is not undeserving the title. Knowledge, which till within the last two or three centuries, was hid from the bulk of mankind, now takes a wider range, and there are few who are buried in en-

tire ignorance. Such a portion of
 learning as will enable men to con-
 sult the oracles of true science, the
 Scriptures, will shortly become al-
 most general, and as soon as that shall
 be the case, the Poor, I apprehend,
 will stand in need of but little farther
 instruction. To make them gram-
 marians or geometricians would be un-
 necessary, perhaps hurtful, and should
 ever any of them shew a bent of ge-
 nius for any particular science, they
 will readily be put into the way to
 cultivate it. If along with the sacred
 writings which they read, there shall
 occasionally be published such books
 as are adapted to their circumstances,
 such as mix some slight degree of
 amuse-

amusement with instruction, such as may spread content and complacency through the weary circle of the cottage fire, the benevolent designs of those who instituted Sunday Schools will be fully answered, and the sphere of human happiness considerably enlarged.

The writer of the present treatise sits down with this design : whether he shall succeed in the execution, or not, he hopes to call the attention of others to the same subject ; and he flatters himself his endeavour will not then be entirely thrown away.

There are few books, at least that he knows of, written expressly with this design, and yet the Poor, or those in low circumstances, form by far the greatest part of every society ; it always has been so, and so it must ever remain : laws may abolish titles ; external marks of honour may be laid aside among a people, but the most solid mark of distinction, wealth, can never be equally circulated, and perhaps the *Indigent* might not meet with a greater share of respect, in a community where traders and merchants were supreme, than they do at present in those kingdoms, where titles and riches form, as it were, a balance to each other.

Since,

Since, however, the disproportion of wealth, though unavoidable, is an evil ; since there must be men to labour, as well as men to enjoy ; since a load, wherever placed, must remain a load, it shall be my business to point out such circumstances, as will tend to make the weight of it the less oppressive.

The bulk of mankind is born to labour ; by the sweat of their brow they are to eat their bread : the sentence passed on man is executed upon the multitude, whilst a few, a *seemingly* happy few, *appear* exempted from its consequences. The husbandman, for instance, wears out his life in toil ; in
every

every season of the year the fields require his attention ; spring, summer, autumn, and winter, brings each a renewal of cares and labours ; and were he for a little while to neglect his proper duty, the uncultivated lands would rebuke his negligence. His grounds of tillage would produce but little grain, and his pasturage would be overgrown with weeds. Desolation would spread over the face of the earth, and the eye, instead of being delighted with luxuriant meadows, and plenteous harvests, would turn with disgust from scenes of wretchedness and want. Villages, towns, and cities, which depend on him for a constant supply of food, would be left without bread ;

bread ; famine would be felt in the streets ; and death in its most horrid shape would stalk around.—These calamities would be the consequence of the slothfulness of the husbandman ; and can he repine, because his exertions are attended by some little weariness ? Can he indulge in a stupid idleness at the expence of the lives of millions ? Can he not see the necessity there is for his labour ? That it arises from the inevitable laws of nature, or in other words, from the appointed will of God ?—Besides, if he could extend his views a little, he might be enabled to perceive, that all who are born in low circumstances, are under the same obligation that he is. The sailor, the
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mechanic, all, by an indispensable law of Providence, must act aright in their several occupations, or the order of society would be overturned ; some of the necessaries, some of the decencies of life would be wanting, and a stop put to those movements by which it is sustained. But not to confine myself to any particular order, have not all, who earn their daily bread by their daily labour, a thousand things, if they would consider them, to alleviate the hardships of their condition ? They are commonly early enured to the state to which they are destined, and it is very well known, that the body, as well as the mind, is reconciled to almost any thing by habit ; so that what

would in reality be a very severe suffering to some, is performed by others with comparative ease; where the load is weighty, the strength is commonly great; when the heat of the sun is oppressive, or the rain pours down with violence, their frames, hardened by exposure, are enabled without much risk or inconvenience to bear it.—Hope, too, is cut off from none; the hope of bettering their fortunes, and advancing themselves to higher ranks among men than they were born to, or have hitherto moved in. I do not speak at present of religious consolation, which I shall consider afterwards, only of the desire there is in the human breast, and which in itself is not illaudable,

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which

which tempts men to wish for eminence, even in this perishing state of things.—I fear I may be misunderstood, and therefore I will explain myself more at large. We are forbidden in our sacred writings, “to
 “ lay up treasures on earth ;” “ to
 “ care for the body,” &c. but these injunctions are only given, I apprehend, to prevent us from having too great a regard for the world, and its fleeting pleasures ; and to inspire us with an earnest desire for the happiness of a future state, which is clearly made known in those writings only. What we meet with here strikes the senses, and gives immediate pleasure ; what will be the felicity of futurity, we know

know not exactly, and it *appears* at a distance ; necessary was it therefore to be inculcated, that an overweening fondness for what cannot endure, what entices to immoral conduct, and produces a neglect of the ordinances of God, is highly blameable. This I conceive to be the true meaning of these, and similar sayings ; nor does the religion of Christ prohibit men from active exertions in their several stations, nor from fixing a due value on the acquirements they shall be able to make by such exertions.

There is, then, a field for hope even in this life, and those who are forlorn and penniless may, by industry and

patient perseverance, lay up a little store to enable them to educate their children with decency, and to put them into a way to return their care with a kindness that shall cheer them in the evening of their lives :—Or perhaps, by the blessing of God upon their honest labours, and if it shall be consistent with his will for the good of all, a fortunate concurrence of circumstances may supply them with the means of rising to the state they aspire to—but I will stop here, it is not ambition I want to inspire, I only design to tell them, that the situation of none is so low, so utterly destitute of comfort, that hope, which is said to be the principal ingredient in human happiness,

piness, cannot have room to enter; and that a reasonable wish for the advantages of fortune is not blameable.

If then all mankind are placed by a superior Power in their several stations, and hope is not excluded even from the lowest, to what purpose is it to repine? If the burden must be borne, surely it will not become lighter by discontent! On the contrary, a patient spirit will enable the body to support fatigues it would otherwise sink under, and the early habit of labour must have made labour less toilsome. Whence is it, then, that we find the Poor so generally discontented?—The evil springs from many causes,

causes, and I mean to consider separately such of them as appear to me worthy consideration.

This spirit of discontent very often proves destructive to society, and more than any other thing is distressing to the Poor themselves.

The lowest of the Poor are commonly ignorant; they can take but a narrow survey of things; without knowledge derived from books, they know no more than what they can learn, in a small circle in a town, or a yet smaller one in a village; finding that their lives abound with hardships, fatigues, hunger, neglect from those

those in the same situation, and too often insolence from men in a higher; they hastily and rashly, and erroneously conclude, that from their poverty springs all their sufferings, and of course, that all who are not poor are happy: a great mistake this, and teeming with mischief; for as happiness is what all men aim at: as the wish to attain it is natural and strong, and must ever operate upon the mind, it is not to be rooted out, or even restrained: the proper road is only to be pointed out, and those bye paths which seem to lead to it by a shorter rout, but are in fact only endless mazes, sufficiently made known, that henceforth no unwary traveller may enter them without

out being forewarned of their intricacies.

Know, then, you who look with envy on riches, that what so strongly attracts your fancy, is not really what it seems : you see a man with money to command every necessary of life, and every luxury, but you forget, that possession deprives him of the quick sense of enjoyment, and he in truth has no more satisfaction from his delicacies than you have from plain and homely fare ; perhaps not so much. You, at least, have good appetites ; hunger and labour prevent you from nauseating your food ; but with him it is often otherwise. Not being com-
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pelled

pelled by necessity to labour, he too often indulges himself in slothfulness, or I should rather say, is sunk in stupid listlessness; for in sloth there is no indulgence, till his body becomes unhealthy; he then loaths the most costly delicacies, and his affluence only embitters his anguish, by strongly shewing him its insufficiency to purchase one natural pleasure.—Do you wish for the wines that furnish his tables? Ah! little do you know the danger of the wish; they may produce a short delirium of joy, but when reason returns, she condemns herself for having been so deceived, and confesses that in intemperate mirth there is no happiness.—You surely cannot

D imagine,

imagine, that from the splendour of
 drefs, or equipage, or costly houses,
 or extensive pleasure-grounds, there
 can arife true heart-felt content. The
 poffeffion of all thefe things is fo fa-
 miliar to the poffeffor, that he has no
 more enjoyment from them, than you
 have from your cottages, your Sunday
 fuits of cloaths, or your little gardens.
 A fudden acquifition of wealth, to be
 fure, may for a while fo elevate a weak
 mind, as to produce a temporary fe-
 licity ; but it cannot from its own na-
 ture continue : it is too often like a
 bladder, fo fully diftended with wind,
 that it burfts afunder. A trifling le-
 gacy may have the fame effect on
 you ; if you ufe it with difcretion, it
 may

may prove highly useful ; but if you neglect your occupations, assume a self-confidence, and fancy yourselves far advanced above your neighbours, the swelling sentiment may for a time give you pleasure, but the contempt of all around you will shortly convince you how powerless it is ; that the satisfaction of self-conceit is transitory, and that your minds to be at ease, must return to their ordinary level.

If the rich have some advantages, there are also circumstances to balance against them ; they have many cares, and anxieties of mind, that you know not of ; and indeed a kind Provi-

dence has so ordered it, that the greatest happiness they can experience, I mean that their situation affords, and which is excluded from your's, is, the power they have of being extensively serviceable to the Indigent: all other pleasures mock their aim, and elude their grasp. Ought you then to envy their situation, or what will lead you to it, to be dissatisfied with your own? Rather reflect a little on the blessings you do enjoy; be thankful for them, and endeavour to heighten, if possible, the happiness of all around you.

You are endowed with as great natural capacities, as the richest, the most powerful, or the wisest of men are.

are. You are placed in the same world, have the common benefit of the sun, and every refreshing breeze, are subject to no more diseases, nor does death present to you a more terrifying aspect; and the blessed and joyful hope of a resurrection from the grave is extended equally to all.— All the pleasures that are fitting and allowable, you are as capable of feeling as they. The solid comforts of domestic enjoyment; the endearments of infants, and affection and duty of children as they advance in age, none can more strongly relish than you; and compared with such blessings, the pomp and pride of Courts is a mere mockery. Such are the blessings you
have

have in common with the rich ; but you have some peculiar to your own state, and which may perhaps be equal in the balance to those which appear so much to outweigh them.

It is no new thing to compare your humble situation to the lowly vales, over which the winds sweep harmlessly, whilst the mountain-sides are ravaged by their fury ; and the frequency of the remark shews strongly, that it is founded in experience. By your situation you have less room for apprehension ; and the dread of evil to come often poisons the cup that seems to sparkle with delight. “ *The want of riches,*” says an elegant writer,

writer, “ is *generally* compensated, by
 “ having more hopes, and fewer fears,
 “ by a greater share of health, and a
 “ more exquisite relish of the smallest
 “ enjoyments, than those who possess
 “ them are usually blessed with.”—If
 it is really so, and your situation is na-
 turally more productive of hope, than
 a state of affluence is, this alone might
 balance against the numerous evils
 you are exposed to. But you alone
 are not exposed to evils. The rich
 have their toils as well as you, and,
 perhaps, such as you would not ex-
 change for your own, were you but
 once fully acquainted with them.

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Your fatigues are corporeal only. After the long labour of the most scorching harvest-day, a night of uninterrupted, quiet sleep, restores your limbs to their former vigour, and your minds unoppressed, give a spring and elasticity to the exertions of the body. But very different are the toils of the rich; their labours are the labours of the mind; and when the mind sinks in lassitude, what shall relieve it? That people who are possessed of the gifts of fortune, should wear out their strength in tilling the ground, or in manual operations, is unnecessary, and would be unbecoming; but they are not left at liberty from restraints, and

straints you may, perhaps, think more intolerable than your own. After a youth passed in schools and colleges, where one kind of study is, or ought to be, succeeded by another, they are called into the world, to apply to practical use, the skill and knowledge they have acquired.—You can never surely suppose, the statesman, the lawyer, the physician, or the divine, has more quiet or more repose than you? And as for that numerous class of men, who seem born merely to consume in sloth, what the skill and industry of others provide, the neglect of all, and a strong sense of talents unemployed, and time unimproved, must prevent them, could you but

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feel

feel for a single day what they feel, from ever being the objects of your envy.—In short, it is so ordered, that the Poor must labour for their subsistence, and the subsistence of others ; and those possessed of wealth, study to secure the interest of the communities in which they live, to protect the persons and the properties of individuals from insult, to restore their lost health, or to be a guard to their morals and conduct.

The great difference between the Poor and the Rich then is, that the Poor are chiefly engaged in bodily labours, and the Rich in the labours of the mind ; that the employments
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of the former are generally conducive to health, and the avocations of the latter too frequently destroy it, by producing a peculiar kind of lowness of spirits, which the countryman is happily a stranger to. It is true, there are numbers of the affluent who entirely devote themselves to pleasure, but as this defeats the purpose of man's creation, to happiness, as I before observed, they are unable to attain : in the midst of their mirth is sadness, their own hearts often reproaching them with the uselessness of their existence ; and certainly, he who *feels himself* to be altogether useless in this life, can have but a slight hope of enjoying the rewards promised to bene-

volent exertion in the life that is to come.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, being sensible that *discontent* is the parent of numberless evils, and that the Poor, if they can but once learn to consider poverty in its true light, will submit to it without repining.— They will perceive, that they, as well as all others, are placed in their present state by an Almighty Power. That the burden laid upon them, they cannot by any method whatever remove, but that by a submissive acquiescence the weight of it will not be very sensibly felt. That by industry and œconomy, they may make
such

such a provision for their families, as will enable them to procure all the necessaries of life. That riches do not, to a certainty, produce happiness. That every family delight the poor man may partake of as well as the rich. That affluence has its labours as well as poverty, though different in kind, with care far more abundant; and that those who wallow, as it were, in pleasure, are entirely undeserving the blessings bestowed on them; are in a state to call down the pity even of the indigent, as wretches who enjoy not the happiness they seem surrounded with; and who are cut off by their trifling pursuits from the most sublime of all hope, the

hope

hope of participating the felicity which is to be the future reward of useful labour and patient resignation, in a life where they appear to be equally the indispensable duty of man.

Discontent is thus certainly corroding : so long as it is confined within a man's own breast, as it were, it effectually banishes self-enjoyment from thence : but it is very rarely, indeed, that it is limited to such narrow bounds. A man dissatisfied with his own situation, is not very far from envying that of some other ; and envy among the poor and unprincipled, is ever ready to break out into acts

of violence.—Consider, now, a moment the case of an individual;—a man with every ability for labour, and every habit that can render it easy, becomes, by having listened to the tale of the idle and profligate, sullen and discontented. No longer rising with the choristers of nature, the “birds of heaven,” that seem to pour out their little souls in melody to amuse him, does he now cheerfully and contentedly, after offering short prayers and ejaculations of praise to the God of all, betake himself with assiduity to the labour by which he and his family were supported. A poison has been infused into his veins, by which the whole mass of his blood will

will shortly be corrupted. Instead of the smiling face of innocence, behold the lowering brow of despair.—His little ones want bread ;—the strength of body that before was so useful, is now turned against society ; he sallies forth to spoil, or, perhaps, to murder ; and his own once-happy life is terminated by a death full of ignominy, and full of horror.—But supposing this a case that only rarely happens, still is discontent, and envy its first-born, to be considered as the source of the idleness and dissoluteness of manners, so much complained of, among the Poor.

Having

Having come so near the head of the stream, it would be an easy matter for me to follow it through all its windings, till it emptied itself into the stormy ocean of life; but sufficient for my purpose will it be to trace a few of those devious channels through which run the bitter waters that poison human enjoyment.

To *covet* what belongs to another, is, as far as the mind is concerned, to possess one's self of it. The law of God is set at defiance, and the dread of human laws alone restrains from rapine. But it is evident, before we can covet, or have a desire to seize what is not our own; we must first undervalue the thousands of blef-

things which we have. A man whose appetite is satisfied, can never feel a craving for the delicacies of the most luxurious table.

He who by diligence in the operations of husbandry, or skilful application to a trade, provides a supply for his family, and feels himself happy and contented in sharing it with his wife and children, will seldom relax his successful endeavours; will never loiter away his time in idleness. He will not leave his own fire-side, to spend his little leisure in places of infamy and idle resort.* He will remember that

* Gin-houses, Ale-houses, and other houses of the kind, are the places where the dissolute Poor spend too much of their time and money; and it is lamentable to consider the ill effect it has upon their morals.

his offspring have a call upon him for all his earnings. A contented man will husband well his possessions.

As his own breast is serene, he will behold with satisfaction the happiness of such as are happy around him. His mind will be ever grateful to his Maker; and of any benefit or kindness he may receive from a fellow-creature, he will ever have a remembrance. Instead of rejoicing at any calamity that may befall his richer neighbour, he will find himself greatly hurt at it; he will assist him, if he can, in his distresses; his tongue will never utter reproaches; his voice will be the voice of compassion.

As his time will be all usefully employed, he will have none to throw away on barbarous diversions. A man happy in himself cannot be cruel. Is it possible, that he who rejoices in the happiness of his own existence, can wish to deprive the innocent brute-creature of its life? Can he delight in tortures and agonizing pains? No, none but men of turbulent passions have such delights. None but corrupted hearts can derive a pleasure from anguish.

As he will avoid what is savage, so will he shun what is illegal. He will have no relish for what are called the *sports of the field*. He will have a high respect

respect for the laws of his country, and he knows it is contrary to those laws to destroy the game, which is reserved for others; birds and animals which are fed on grain and herbage none of his. Indeed the time that would be consumed in such pursuits, he would be ill able to allot to them, and were no human law broken, he would not be so simple as to give up the certain provision he makes for his family by industry, for the very uncertain profits he might make from the chase; and supposing for a moment, as has often been said, the Game Laws * to be hard upon the

Poor

* Nothing is a more common cause of contention than the Game; and the Laws relating to

Poor (and whilst they continue in force, they ought certainly not to be broken)

to it, have by many been thought to be arbitrary. This is not the place for a discussion of that nature, which must be left to be decided by the great Council of the Nation; but I may have leave to observe, that if they do press hard on any body of people, it is not on those in very low circumstances, for they are prevented by that very lowness of circumstances, from the pursuit of the Game as a diversion; hunting and shooting are fascinating amusements, and when a poor man once gives his mind up to them, farewell all industry, all œconomy, and domestic comfort.—If they are not proper as a diversion, they certainly never could be so with a view to gain: indeed, were that the case, the wild animals, which are pursued with so much earnestness, would soon, in this populous kingdom, be all destroyed.—Poaching, as it is now carried on, is highly destructive of good morals among the Poor; for being a breach of a law,
when

broken) still the man, satisfied with his condition, would be always able to spend his time to more advantage, than in taking hares and partridges, even were he at liberty to do it.

I shall here close the account of what I have to say on this part of the subject, and proceed to address myself concisely to the Affluent, whom I wish to put particularly on their guard

when once a man is in the habit of it, he soon learns to commit acts of more pernicious tendency: it is chiefly carried on in the night; and inured to nocturnal excursions, he seldom confines himself long to what he meant at first only to destroy.—So long as the Game Laws exist, it becomes every one to endeavour to persuade the Poor in his neighbourhood to be obedient to them.

against a passion to which they are particularly prone—the passion of pride.

That any human being should be addicted to this passion, one would think, judging from the condition of man, his weaknesses and wants, an utter impossibility, and yet a very superficial view of life instantly shews, that scarcely any are exempt from it. How very few are there, who think of themselves as they ought to think, who have not some fancied superiority, of beauty, strength, riches, or intellect, which raises them unreasonably high in their own opinion? Low, indeed, must be the man who cannot find some one or other below him in
some

some circumstance, over whom he may exercise the arrogance of a haughty spirit ! The man just above want, very often treats the poor and despised beggar, with all the insolence and rudeness of accumulated wealth, with an insolence he is ready enough to resent when he himself is the object of it. The universality of pride, however, can by no means serve as an extenuation of it. That the Poor should complain of it in the Rich is natural, and I dare say they do believe it confined to the higher rank, never even suspecting themselves capable of it ; and indeed, as it seems *principally* to arise from riches, at least to the height that is injurious to society ; as there

is something in the possession of wealth which wonderfully inflates the mind, I shall confine myself very much to the arrogance springing from thence, and shall think my little trouble sufficiently repaid, if the condition of even a few of the Poor shall be at all bettered by it.

Wealth is either hereditary or acquired. That one who is born amidst prosperous affairs, whose wishes are all gratified from his youngest years, who finds a train of dependents in haste even to anticipate them, should assume some little self-confidence, is not very surprizing: without great care in the education of a youth so
cir-

circumstanced, it would be more surprising were it not so. But that those, whose early condition has been exposed to neglect and contempt, who have felt the oppression of wealth, should in their turn exercise the same kind of oppression over others, appears so extraordinary, that were it not a case every day seen, it would be with difficulty believed. It seems, these people have in early life acquired such narrow notions, as they are never afterwards able to shake off. Finding a certain air of dignity often attached to people of condition, they have mistaken it for pride, and in imitating it, when fortune smiles upon them, they make themselves as ridi-

culous as they are disgusting. The danger is, that as their possessions increase, this preposterous folly will increase; for not being raised above their former equals, except by their money, they know no other way of keeping them, at what they think a proper distance, than a kind of supercilious churlishness. Their former equals are seldom disposed to pay them the deference they lay claim to, and a sort of warfare is carried on between them, the one party always endeavouring to raise themselves to an height they will never attain, and the other trying to reduce them to a level, they have undoubtedly sprung from. Even those, as I before observed,

served, whose title to respect is thought to be less doubtful, who have been used to it from childhood, are too seldom satisfied with the share that is cheerfully given them. In order to exalt themselves, they endeavour to lower others, and thus combine in this, and in this alone, with the fortuitous possessors of wealth, in raising a pile to their own greatness, on a foundation of popular awe and admiration.

I might here ridicule the passion, which, while it apes a royal deportment, and would arrogate divine honours, really sinks a man beneath his ordinary level, in the opinion of the
 sensible

sensible part of the world ; and had it no other effect than this, it would be more properly the object of ridicule, than of serious admonition. But, alas ! pride is not to be treated with so lenient a hand ; it is a wild, luxuriant shoot, which can never be properly trained, but must, for the benefit of the whole, be entirely lopped off.

Begin, then, with the proud man, in his own family ! view him, as surrounded by his servants, by his wife and children ! Here it is, that he daily and hourly practises those lessons, the public exhibition of which produces such general abhorrence : his servants are unhappily connected with
him

him for a limited time ; his wife can hope for no period to her sufferings, but his, or her own dissolution ; his children are doubly affected, being perpetually wounded by the moroseness of his manners, and in continual danger of imbibing them themselves. His orders are all given with the air of a tyrant ; instead of a request, a desire, or a wish, no language is heard, but the harsh language of command : the greatest exertion can never meet with praise, because the greatest exertion is incessantly required.—The utmost expectation of his miserable dependents is, to escape censure and abuse. Within his house, it may literally

terally be said, dwell discontent and sorrow.

Let us now follow him abroad, and observe how he mixes with mankind more at large; and here I need but just hint, that habits so deeply rooted, are not very easily shaken off; by the observing eye, he is immediately detected; let him attempt as long as he pleases, to clothe his face in smiles, let him try to attune his voice to gentleness, the impossibility of accomplishing his efforts, serves but the more forcibly to display his true character. No man can be always guarded; as an excellent writer has observed,

served, “when Nature is shut out at
“the door, she will still peep in at
“the window.” The smile that was
designed to express complacency, in-
sensibly varies into the sneer of con-
tempt; and the tone of pity is now
and then raised into the harsher note
of anger. Indeed, it is wisely or-
dained by Providence, that the mind,
or habit of the soul, is legibly enough
stamped on the exterior part of man,
and it is commonly in vain that he
endeavours to conceal its impression.
I am sure it is so with the proud man,
who, like the silly bird that hides its
head, and leaves its body exposed to
danger, very often, when he fancies
himself the most enveloped, is the

H most

most open to the comments of the observing.

But it is not always so with pride ; it is more frequently disposed to display its glittering plumage, than to hide its blemishes, or defects. Its landed possessions, its monied property, its mansions, and splendid equipages, are its darling theme ; and, in its high regard for them, it learns to despise poverty ; nothing being more common among the great of every nation, than *contemptuous* language when they speak of the Poor. The *mob*, the *vulgar*, and such terms, sufficiently express the estimation they are held in, even by those who occasionally

sionally do them acts of kindness. The ingratitude and envy of people of low condition are railed at, without its being ever once remembered, that whilst the rich make an ostentatious display of their riches, the uneducated, unprincipled Poor, will wish for a part of that wealth which gives so much consequence, and that it is impossible to be grateful for benefits, which were conferred, only because it was fashionable to give money : a man is more won by a word of gentleness, by a single look of attention, than by the gift accompanied with harshness, although it may relieve his necessity, and in reality more is conferred to be grateful for ; few in this country are in

absolute want of bread, but all are sensible to insult; every poor man knows that the pride of affluence can wound him, he often feels that it does; but the asperity of his nature is softened by the benignant aspect of his superiors, and retains a long impression of their gentle treatment: he is forgetful often of the relief that was carelessly, or insultingly afforded; but I must be so far an advocate for human nature as to insist, that he is seldom ungrateful to real generosity.

Not only are the Poor spoken slightingly of, but if ever they shew the least independence of spirit; if ever they repel insult with an appearance

ance of contempt, they are by the proud man persecuted with unremitting rigour. Haughty himself, he cannot bear the least of it in others, and he is ever the first to detect it : whether it be expressed in the voice, the attitude, or the eye, it is equally stinging : pride alone is wounded by pride, as hard bodies only emit fire when struck by hard bodies. To meet with opposition where servility was expected ; to find the erect spirit of man, instead of the cringing, fawning spaniel, alas, is too exasperating ! What human creature with lofty notions of his own importance can bear it ?—No, all must submit to him ; all must, as it were, be annihilated before

before him. He lives commonly surrounded by flatterers, an abject, selfish race of men, who enter into his sentiments to bring about their own ends; have seemingly no will of their own, and yet absolutely govern his; divert his humanity, so long as he has the least of it about him, from its proper objects, the needy and distressed, and procure all his favours to themselves; unfit him for laudable society, and thus render him the object of contempt and abhorrence, instead of being what he aimed at, a man beloved, respected, and adored.

Thus have I pointed out, what I consider as the greatest evils of society,

or rather, what are the sources of the greatest evils, *discontent* and *envy* among the Poor, and *pride* in the Rich; and opposite as seem these affections of the mind, they spring, as I conceive, from the same root. Discontent, what is it, but a dissatisfaction with the situation in which one is placed? What is envy, but a desire to possess one's self of some advantage another enjoys? Pride has too great a regard for those advantages, and a turgid state of mind is produced in consequence of being possessed of them. The discontented man is always in danger of becoming envious; and the envious, were he master of what he covets, one may venture to assert,

would

would not long retain the virtue of humility; whilst, on the contrary, the meek and lowly-minded, reduced from affluence to want, submits without repining to the dispensations of Providence.

These passions all spring from irreligion; I do not mean, that they are to be seen in those only who scoff at devotion; who profess to “live
“without God in the world;” who deride his ordinances, and disbelieve his revelations; of such men I speak not; to such, what I am now writing will, perhaps, appear contemptible; for as they affect to believe the present life the whole of their existence,
they

they will by every method, fair and unfair, endeavour to arrive at distinction ; and when they have gained their end, they will certainly let slip no opportunity of displaying their honours, their titles, and their wealth. The irreligion I mean, may and often does subsist, with great appearance of regularity in devotional exercises, even with a regard to many moral duties ; but it is a want of entire reliance, entire confidence, in the assurances and promises of the Almighty. God has declared himself to be “ no respecter
 “ of persons :” this declaration cannot relate to the present life, because some are born to misery, and inherit

misfortune ; it must bear a reference, therefore, to a future state of existence : in that state all who have deserved, all who are capable of felicity, will enjoy it, and in the very degree the propensities they have acquired here, will admit of. Now knowing this, which every one may know, who has the opportunity of reading the *scriptures*, and believing it, which all must, who give credit to their authority, how absurd, how inconsistent, how repugnant to that belief is it, to repine at the unequal distribution of the goods of fortune, or to look down with contempt on those who possess them not ? Can he who says, “ Lord thou hast
“ wisely

“ wisely ordered all things,” even wish to deprive any one of his possessions? Can the heart grateful to God for what it enjoys, ever harbour disgust or dislike to any human being, because undistinguished here by the favours of the Almighty? Impossible; the sentiments are irreconcilable with each other; and notwithstanding all appearances and professions, it must be suspected, that they who *seem* pious, and are either discontented, envious, or proud, have not true piety in their hearts: they may pray for favours, but they are not satisfied with such as the God of the universe pleases to bestow upon them: they may wish to avert

misfortunes, and being sensible that they cannot effect it themselves, that they cannot command even one moment of futurity, that an unexpected turn of events may reduce them to the state of beggary they so much despise, they may petition Superior Power to conduct the affairs of the world in the train they have hitherto moved ; but they leave not themselves, and all they have, to his absolute disposal ; they acknowledge him not as the giver of all good ; they worship him from necessity, not love ; and by an outward observance of his commands, and a shew of respect for them, they hope to impose on him who seeth all hearts,

hearts, and knoweth all thoughts ; they hope to gain his protection, or rather to bribe him by a few prayers and supplications, to allow them to remain in that state of exaltation, from whence originates all their pride, and all their harshness to their fellow-creatures.

But true religion will teach us to have very different notions of the Deity, far other sentiments respecting our situation in this world, and of course to regulate our actions and our thoughts by more just and better principles.

The

The truly religious man believes that every thing was created by the power of God ; and observing the order and regularity with which the universe is conducted, the change of the seasons, the budding and blooming of plants, the return of the sun and moon, and all the heavenly host at their exact and appointed times ; he believes also that God is infinitely wise, as well as infinitely powerful : he may also infer, that a Being infinitely powerful and infinitely wise, must be infinitely holy, just and pure. Acknowledging this, which all must who are capable of just reflection, it will necessarily follow, that the Being
 who

who regulates and conducts the movements of all things, can, whenever he thinks proper, controul or suspend those movements, can divulge his will to all or to any particular people, in what place, or at what period he shall think most fit ; nor is the wisest of men, with all his boasted wisdom, equal to the decision of the propriety or impropriety of its being done on this or that particular occasion ; all he can surely know is, that the Almighty has that power, and by the authority on which the book called the Bible is founded, the religious man will farther believe, that his power has already been exercised to that purpose ;

and that the sacred Scriptures contain a revelation of the will of God : he will diligently therefore study them, particularly the part called the New Testament, in which he will find such precepts as will most assuredly make him happy here, if diligently observed, and prepare him for happiness hereafter ; he will observe, in the life of the divine person there recorded, a most perfect conformity to the doctrines he delivered, an example of every virtue, -carried, indeed, to a height mortals cannot attain, but which it was undoubtedly meant they should endeavour to imitate ; he will be truly thankful for the most gracious promise
of

of the forgiveness of sins, on true repentance and a sincere renunciation of them; and he will ever have in view, amidst all the temptations this world may hold out, its gay and beautiful scenery, its promises of ease and security, respect, affluence, and honours, that were all its flattering appearances realised, they can continue but for a short time; that the ills which threaten, pain, poverty, contempt, and death, are the most distressing in the distant prospect, that they are all admitted into the world by its Supreme Governor for the wisest and best purposes; that they are designed as trials to man to prepare him

for a happy existence, where no change can ever take place, and where Discontent, Envy, and Pride, can never enter.

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